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Rural Lines

RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

"Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That there is hereby created and established an agency of the United States to be known as the 'Rural Electrification Administration' . . ."

—Public Law No. 605
May 20, 1936

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CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

REA Marks Another Silver Anniversary (page 9)

Telephone Service The Co-op Way (page 11)

Contents (page 23)





A Message from the **ADMINISTRATOR**

This month marks the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936. I feel that an anniversary should be a time to pause and to look in two directions—backward over the accomplishments of the past, and forward to the challenges and opportunities of the future.

We of REA can well be proud of our past achievements in both our electric and telephone programs. Through them, we have contributed to better rural living in every corner of our country.

But what of the future? As I see it, one challenge we still must meet will be to extend dial service to rural areas that have been too long bypassed and ignored. I am convinced that to do this, we must place greater emphasis on telephone cooperatives. Although REA will continue to make loans to qualified telephone companies, we will also give full assistance to local people desiring to form telephone cooperatives to meet their local needs for better area coverage and service.

Our telephone program has moved ahead in the last 11 years. In many ways it has done well. We wonder, however, if it has done as well as it should. Since taking office as REA Administrator, I have heard a number of criticisms of the program. Some of them are serious. Presently, we are reappraising the entire telephone program and probing for the facts. As we do so, we will ask ourselves if the established REA policies and procedures are getting the best possible results.

As soon as we are sure we have all the facts, we will take direct remedial steps. We will need your help. I believe that your energy, counsel, and enterprise, combined with REA's financing and technical support, can do much to bring modern dial telephones to all the rural areas of our Nation.


Administrator

Rural Lines

June E. Panciera, Editor

Contributors to this issue: Robert Patrick, Donald Cooper, Louisan Mamer. Hubert Kelley, Jr., and Barton Stewart, Jr.

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Public Relations



with a personal touch

"I would like to thank you for helping me to win my \$10 prize money. I am proud of the lamp you helped me to make and I'm sure the other kids are proud of theirs, too," reads a letter from a 7th grader to the Jackson Electric Membership Corporation, Jefferson, Georgia. The youngster had entered Jackson Electric's annual Youth Electric Project for members of the 4-H Clubs, the Future Homemakers of America, and the Future Farmers of America. The help he mentioned was received from E. E. Thurmond, the cooperative's director of member education and public relations.

The Youth Electric Project is only one of the many promotional activities conducted by Jackson Electric to teach their members and future members how to use electricity, to achieve better service and to obtain more efficiency.

In addition to its monthly newsletter to each member, the co-op makes extensive use of local newspapers, radio,

and television. Thurmond feels, however, that the greatest gains in public relations and member education in power use have been made through personal contacts with area schools, youth organizations, and other groups.

Jackson EMC employees are aware that the students of today will be the co-op members of tomorrow. They work closely with the young people to expand their knowledge of the many uses of electricity. They help them better understand the benefits of co-operative electric service, and particularly how this service furnishes them adequate electricity at a low cost.

The cooperative, working with 4-H Clubs and FFA chapters throughout an eight-county area, selects each year an "Outstanding Young Farmer." The purpose of this project is to recognize the accomplishments of outstanding FFA and 4-H members and to promote safe and economical use of electricity in the home and on the farm. Winner of this year's award will receive an all-



Members of the Jackson County FFA chapter, Braselton, Georgia, listen as E. E. Thurmond tells of the co-op's search for the "Outstanding Young Farmer."

expense-paid trip to Chicago to attend the conference of the American Institute of Cooperatives.

Thurmond works primarily with the boys in the territory. The girls receive guidance and counseling from Mrs. Evelyn Harris, the cooperative's home service advisor. Mrs. Harris, a "live wire" who has been with Jackson Electric for almost 9 years, keeps in close contact with every home demonstration agent and home economics teacher in the area. At the beginning of each year, she meets with the home demonstration agents and plans a full year's activities. She then holds four additional demonstration meetings with these agents during the year. This year's activities highlight "The Best in Electric and Home Living."

Home economics classes from the area schools spend a day at the co-op once a year. At this all-day meeting, the young girls are given valuable instruction on the use of electricity in home freezing, laundering, cooking, care of clothing, and the uses of lighting in home decoration. In addition to conducting meetings at the co-op,

Mrs. Harris visits the schools and works with the home economics classes.

Although Mrs. Harris and Thurmond spend a great deal of time with the young people in the area, their activities are not limited just to students. Thurmond works with co-op members, civic groups, and electric appliance dealers in promoting additional power use and in publicizing the co-op's activities.

During the summer months, Mrs. Harris visits the co-op's three district offices—at Gainesville, Neese, and Lawrenceville—to assist adult co-op members in food preservation and kitchen planning. She has selected key women, referred to as her "leaders," in many of the communities in the territory. She meets regularly with these leaders, informing them of the latest developments in electric living, and they, in turn, relay this information to other homemakers in the community. Mrs. Harris says the leaders are her "listening ears" who channel information to the members and refer member queries back to the co-op.

On the first Wednesday of each

month, Mrs. Harris is featured on a 15-minute radio program in Commerce, Georgia. On this program she gives news of the co-op's activities, plays tapes of meetings, and conducts interviews with leading people in the communities.

Tied in with its annual meeting on the third Saturday of each September, Jackson Electric features programs for both adult members and young people. The meeting is preceded on Friday night by a Youth Night, featuring a talent contest, a beauty contest, and exhibits showing the latest in electric uses. After the business meeting the next day, members and their families have lunch on the co-op's grounds adjoining the headquarters building.

From the enthusiastic reception given their work with the students, Thurmond and Mrs. Harris feel that the youth projects not only will encourage boys and girls to learn about electricity and the proper care and use of electric equipment, but will also encourage them to develop qualities of leadership and good citizenship.



Mrs. Evelyn Harris shows electric range operations to homemakers.

This new customer-service counter was constructed in 1960 to give faster and more efficient attention to members' needs. The lobby is used for displays.



Seaweed, Salt, and Storms



"THERE was a big ball of fire on one of your poles," the woman cried excitedly. She'd just entered the Marathon office of the Florida Keys Electric Cooperative Association, Incorporated, at Tavernier, Florida, and was hurriedly telling of seeing a mysterious flash of fire. "I was fishing from Long Key Bridge when I saw it, so I drove right down to tell you."

It was December, 1960, and power in that particular area of the co-op's territory had gone off five times in less than a month. The servicemen had been searching for the cause of the stoppage, but hadn't been able to locate the trouble.

A service crew drove to the bridge and the woman pointed out the pole on which she'd seen the fire. It was one in a series of water crossings, approximately 200 feet from the bridge running parallel to it. This section of line had just been rebuilt after having been destroyed by Hurricane Donna on September 9, 1960.

As the crew checked the line and the pole, they found that, when the new line had been installed, seaweed had tangled in the line as it was being drawn up between the poles. Then, when the seaweed became dry, wind

blew it down the line to the pole. There it made contact with the arcing horns, opening up the circuit breakers and shutting off the power.

Seaweed is just one of the many unusual hazards at the Florida Keys Co-op. The area, itself, is unique in that it averages only about half a mile of land between the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico and extends from Tavernier down to about 40 miles north of Key West.

There is virtually no farming in the co-op's territory. The Keys is essentially a recreational area, with fishing, boating, and swimming the main attractions. Many area homes are owned by retired businessmen spending their remaining years in the warmth and beauty of the Keys. Recreation has its problems, too. A common saying at the golf course at Marathon is that it's the only course in the world where barracuda are a natural hazard.

A major problem of the co-op is salt contamination. Salt in the atmosphere accumulates on the insulators and crossarms, causing corrosion and leakage current burnings. Most salt is washed away when there is rain, but partially protected areas under the insulators are not washed completely.



Installation of prestressed concrete pilings replaces wood pilings destroyed during Hurricane Donna. New pilings will withstand up to 200 miles an hour wind.

This display graphically illustrates the additional material which must be used by the Florida Keys co-op in its never-ending fight against salt contamination.





This vacation resort on Key Colony Beach is typical of the kind of area served by the Florida Keys Co-op. Year-round recreational facilities are available here.

The salt in these places becomes damp and highly conductive.

To keep operating at the highest efficiency, additional protective material must be used, bringing a complete pole assembly cost up to about \$30 above that of a standard construction. All crossarm braces are of Philippine mahogany, which gives a high impulse level to withstand more electric stress by increasing the insulation over the crossarms.

Prior to Hurricane Donna, distribution poles in the co-op's 5 miles of water crossings were bolted above the water line between two wood pilings. Donna caused total loss or severe damage to all of these structures and the co-op searched for a structure that could possibly withstand a wind velocity of 200 miles per hour.

The structures chosen, and now in use, are prestressed concrete pilings. To install the pilings, a steel caisson

was located on the spot where the piling was to be placed. A heavy steel punch was then dropped inside the caisson to break up the coral rock. As the rock was shattered, high pressure pumps removed all loose material. The pilings were driven 8 to 10 feet into the rock. A hole, large enough to hold the largest creosoted poles available, was made at the top of the piling. Holes were also precast in the pilings to bolt the pole vertically. At the bottom of the pole hole, a 1-inch drain hole was placed to drain off any water that might accumulate from high waves or rain. This "weep hole" is also used as a guide for the ground wire that extends from the pole out through the piling and then down the side of the piling to a ground connected below the waterline.

All the work connected with the installation of these structures was done from a rented barge. For minor re-

pairs on these water crossings, the co-op uses a 16 foot boat, which it owns.

Donna was the most damaging hurricane ever recorded by the U. S. Weather Bureau. The Florida Keys Co-op had system damage in excess of a million dollars. Although much damage was inflicted in Tavernier and further north, the communities to the south, which are served by the cooperative, suffered the greatest destruction. Islamorada, 10 miles south, had destruction estimated in excess of 75 percent; Marathon and Marathon Shores, 45 miles south, estimated their damage at over 50 percent.

Power supply at the Marathon generating plant was not lost during the hurricane and the transmission line to the Tavernier substation was reenergized 20½ hours after power was interrupted during the peak of the hurricane. It was 8 days, however, before complete power was restored.

The co-op had just completed a

\$250,000 line improvement project on all main feeders in the Marathon area. The work included constructing 5½ miles of 69 kv transmission line on 115 structures using 75-foot, class 1 poles. Of these structures, 45 were wrecked: the poles were snapped like matchsticks.

After Donna, a national news commentator predicted that Marathon would require "10 or more years to recover and rebuild, if ever." He couldn't have been more wrong. Marathon and the Keys have done a remarkable job of rebuilding. Today, new construction is seen everywhere: homes and businesses are rapidly rising; a new \$650,000 Fishermen's Hospital is now being built at Marathon. Most businesses in the Keys report receipts are above last year's levels.

The Florida Keys Co-op, even with its tremendous system damage, had revenue in 1960 in excess of a million dollars—for the first time in its 20-year history.

REA MARKS ANOTHER SILVER ANNIVERSARY

TWENTY-FIVE years ago this month, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, which took REA out of the general program of unemployment relief and made it a lending agency charged with getting electricity to rural people. It was this Act also that changed the emphasis of the program to the cooperative approach.

REA's first year—1935—had been a frustrating one. Few loan applications had been received. By the end of the year, it was obvious that if the new agency was to get the job done, it would have to change direction.

Early in 1936, companion bills were introduced in the Congress directing the REA Administrator to give preference in making loans to nonprofit organizations. The REA bill was introduced in the Senate by Senator George W. Norris of Nebraska and in the House of Representatives by Representative Sam Rayburn, now Speaker of the House.

The bill, passed quickly by the Congress, was signed by the President on May 20, 1936. With that signing, the major decisions concerning rural electrification had been made—and the way was cleared for action.



John Scott Named Assistant Administrator

JOHN W. SCOTT, a career employee with 25 years of service with REA, has been named Assistant REA Administrator for Administration. He will be responsible for directing and coordinating the administrative functions of the agency including program analysis, budget formulation and execution, management improvement, information services, general services, administrative and loan accounting, statistical services, and personnel management.

In making the appointment, Administrator Clapp said, "We are delighted that a career Federal employee of Mr. Scott's ability, character, and experience was available to fill this important position. His recognized qualities

of leadership should enable him to make a significant contribution to the administration of our agency."

Scott, a native of Texas, was graduated from Texas A. and M. College in 1929 with a B. S. degree in agriculture administration. He later received a Master's degree in commercial science from Southeastern University, Washington, D. C. The new assistant administrator has been with REA since 1936. He has served in the field as an auditor and in Washington in various administrative positions including Director of the Southwest Area office. His most recent assignment was that of Assistant Chief of the Electric Operations Division in charge of borrowers' accounting. In 1960 he was selected by the Department of Agriculture to receive its Superior Service Award.

During World War II, Scott served as an officer in the U. S. Army Air Force.

Infrared Lamps Heat Milking Parlor

The power use department of Nobles Cooperative Electric at Worthington, Minnesota, has designed a novel heating system for a herringbone milking parlor on its lines. Twelve 250-watt infrared lamps are mounted on swivels so that there are about 30 watts per square foot in the pit area. A ceiling-mounted forced air electric heater keeps the building temperature slightly above freezing at other times. Douglas Wallace, manager of the co-op says, "This is the first such installation on our system and it has proved highly successful."

Telephone Service

The Co-op Way



Co-op telephone lines tie isolated farms throughout the area into the community life of Floyd, Va.

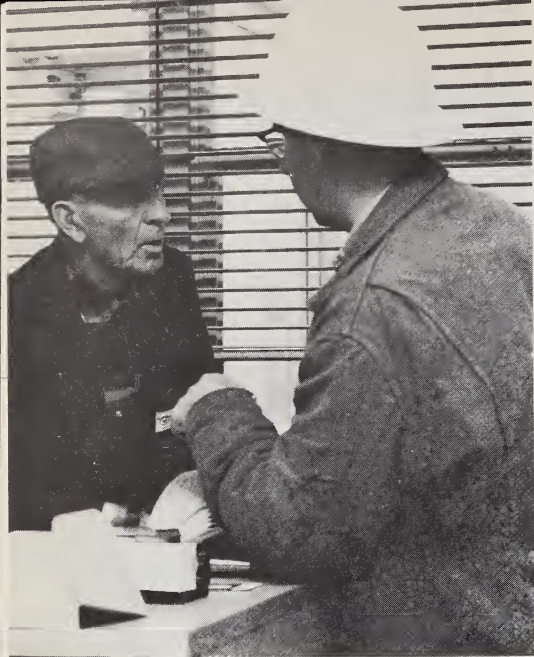
“PEOPLE are important in this telephone business. They are the subscribers, and they are the owners, too.” This is the way Manager Bill Dunn starts out when he tells how the Citizens Telephone Cooperative brought modern dial telephones to Floyd County, Virginia.

There were five small magneto switchboards in and around the county seat town of Floyd. Four of them were mutuels. All five were obsolete, with no capital on hand to modernize service or to extend it.

With the prospect of financing through REA, a series of community meetings—some of them quite stormy—produced agreement on consolidations and acquisitions. Out of the efforts came a countywide telephone cooperative pledged to modern dial service on an area coverage basis. Citizens Telephone Cooperative now serves about 1,800 subscribers through a combination office in Floyd and four unattended dial exchanges at Alum Ridge, Willis, Ballard, and Locust Grove.

The service area lies high against the Blue Ridge Mountains in the southwestern part of the State. The farms here are not big and they are not rich, but the people love the land. Dependable telephone service, along with electric power and better roads, is available now to help farmers operate on a businesslike basis and to attract rural industry.

Members of the cooperative gathered



Elmer Boone (left), a former director of the mutual company which became the nucleus of the REA-financed co-op, renews friendships at the office.



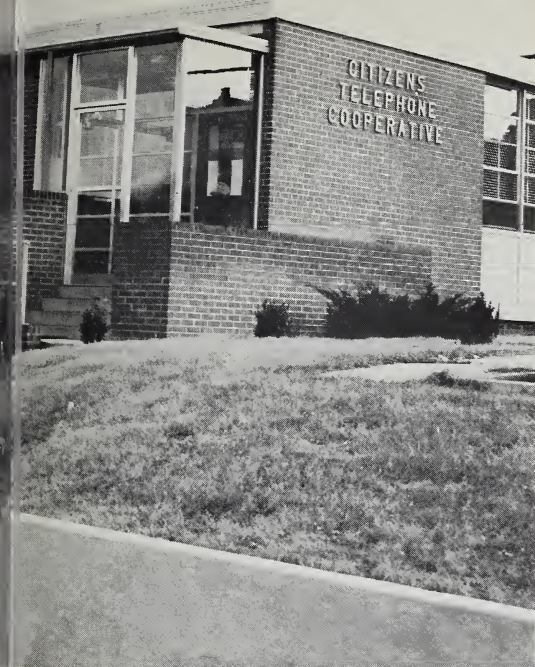
The cooperative's headquarters building

Manager Bill Dunn (right) briefs the line crew before they start out along the country roads. Making up this team are (left to right): Maynard Hylton, P. D. Weeks, Connie Brown, and Clarence Weeks.

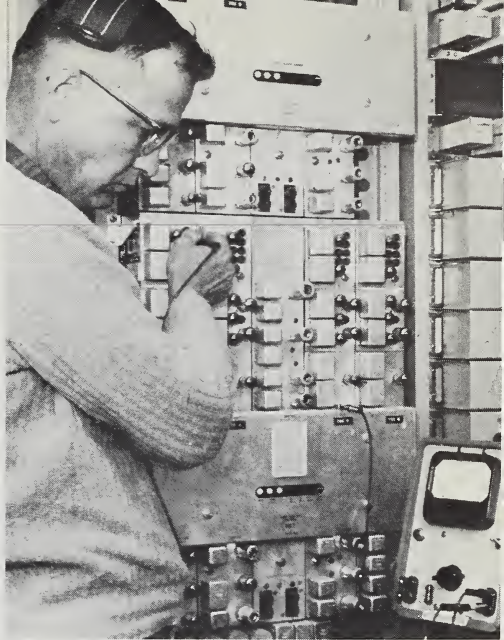


The general manager's daughter Anne saves extension telephone



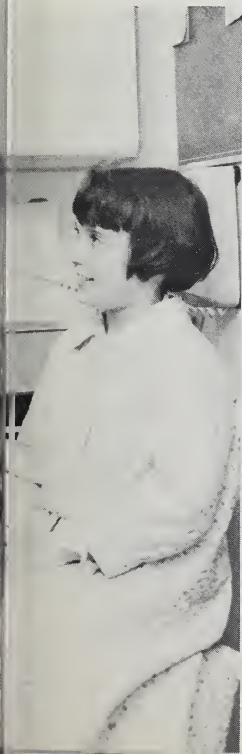


...oyd, Va., is an object of community pride.



Dependable dial service requires heavy investment and skilled personnel. Here Clarence Weeks, maintenance man, lines up "O" carrier equipment.

...wife Dorothy, and
...ehold steps with an
...owed in the kitchen.



The Co-op operates on a nonprofit basis so as to build its lines to the most remote farmhouse. This staking crew checks the map with Manager Dunn and REA field man Ben Bridgeforth (right).



at the Floyd High School in January for the annual meeting. A dinner helped bring in a quorum from farms



Director George Slusher receives his announcement of the co-op's annual meeting along with 1,800 other subscriber-owners in Floyd.

far out along the rural roads. From a slate of 14 candidates, the owner-subscribers elected 7 to the board of directors.

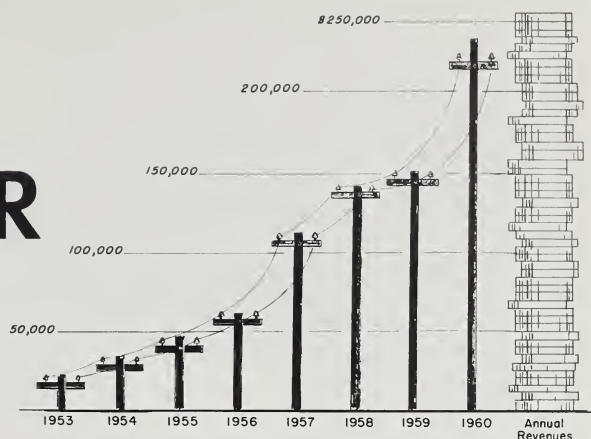
This is a cooperative that has made use of the technical advisory services which REA offers its borrowers. At all stages the board of directors made the decisions and the manager carried out the directives, but REA's technical assistance was welcomed: putting the loan application together, obtaining realistic appraisals, making the acquisitions, organizing the commercial survey and signup campaign, starting the preloan engineering, arranging for construction bids, selecting appropriate plans for the headquarters building, determining fair rates to submit to the State commission, preparing the cutover celebration, and setting up accounting and operating procedures, to name a few.

This kind of teamwork has helped the Citizens Telephone Cooperative attain a sound financial position and a mature operating status.

Getting out a quorum at the annual meeting to vote for directors and hear reports on the business they own is never a problem for this active telephone co-op.



BIG and getting BIGGER



PUSHING toward a goal of area coverage telephone service at the lowest possible cost, the Eastex Telephone Cooperative has grown in just 11 years from a small, struggling system into the largest telephone cooperative in Texas.

At his headquarters in Henderson, Eastex manager C. R. Collins explains, "We've been growing so fast that we haven't been able to follow a budget, though we've mapped one out several times."

Collins, who became co-op plant superintendent in 1952 and manager in 1958, adds wonderingly, "We had no idea at the beginning how far we'd go."

Eastex was one of the first REA telephone borrowers in Texas and it set the first REA-financed poles in the State. It also was the second Lone Star borrower to cutover an REA-financed dial exchange. From that first cutover, however, the management knew that its system was not large enough to give the best possible service to subscribers. It was too small to provide the necessary technical personnel to service the system properly. It also was too small to operate efficiently and still keep rates at a minimum.

A larger system was a must. The young co-op began a series of acquisitions which was to make it in only 8 years time the largest telephone co-op in the State.

Originally organized in 1950 to serve the communities of Laneville and Goodsprings near Henderson, Eastex soon attracted the attention of other nearby areas. Several communities realized that the cooperative was energetic and meant what it said when it talked about quality communications at low cost. Further, there were a number of small systems in the area, whose owners were being pressed to provide more and better service. In most cases, these systems were too small to obtain financing or unwilling to spend the money to upgrade their service. Many of the owners were eager to get out of the telephone business. Eastex, with REA help, has acquired, rebuilt, and interconnected a number of these systems.

The first three, Mt. Enterprise, Pine Hill, and Minden, were all magneto. Minden had only one station, at the switchboard in the Post Office. Its other stations had been wiped out in an ice storm the year before Eastex took over. These 3 exchanges were cutover to dial



C. R. Collins, manager of the Eastex telephone co-op depends on Jim McBride, REA field representative, for advice and guidance in his acquisition program.

in December 1953, with 231 main stations. Today their subscriber lists are nearly triple that number.

Negotiations for the Elysian Fields exchange continued over a period of two years because REA and the owner couldn't agree on the value of the system and the cooperative had no funds available to bridge the gap in the acquisition cost. When the purchase finally went through, Eastex split the Elysian Fields exchange area into two exchanges and built a third, Oak Hill, from the ground up. The three exchanges were cutover in late 1956 with 199 main stations; they now provide service for 482.

Waskom, a dial exchange, was acquired by Eastex in 1956 after a long period of negotiation. The owner decided to sell because of illness. Other

systems wanted the modern little exchange that was serving 351 subscribers, but the owner decided in favor of Eastex because he wanted to make certain that his rural people would get major consideration for service. And they did!

A few subscribers expected too much from the new dial service. Collins recalls that one man complained because Eastex had added a charge to his bill for four calls to Los Angeles. When Collins explained that the cost of long distance calls was not included in the charge for local service, the man replied, "But Mr. Collins, I thought when you paid your dues, you could talk."

In 1954, a telephone cooperative was formed in Livingston, 100 miles south of Henderson. It struggled along for

5 years, but couldn't get going. Its organizers finally threw in the towel and asked Eastex to absorb them. It did, establishing three exchanges in that area. Two offer countywide dialing that includes the county seat of Livingston. While Livingston was being built, Eastex was building another exchange in an area where there wasn't a single telephone. Called the Hudson exchange, it is located in the town of Rusk, the county seat of Cherokee County; it has Extended Area Service with the town of Rusk.

In the late fifties, Eastex acquired the Maydell, Chester, and Goodrich exchanges. The owner of Chester was so tired of being in the telephone business that he gave the exchange up immediately. The cooperative had to send one of its men to the area to operate the switchboard from a trailer for 10 months while dial facilities were being prepared.

It was during the acquisition of the Goodrich exchange that Collins had his most hair raising experience. He and the REA field operations representative were met in Houston by the owner of Goodrich to sign the bill of sale, but according to Texas community property laws, the owner's wife must also sign. The owner had neglected to bring his wife along, so the three men returned to the owner's home to get the wife's signature, but she wasn't there. The owner left Collins and the REA man in the den while he went to another part of the house. Meanwhile the wife returned home and found two strangers making themselves at home in her den. Before they could explain, she began to scream—and scream—and scream! It took some minutes to get the situation straightened out and the woman calmed down.

The co-op is still growing. Contracts have been let to establish an ex-

change at Coldspring, the county seat of San Jacinto County. There are only 19 telephones in this area on a switcher line operated out of Shepherd, a community 19 miles distant. At cutover, Eastex will provide service for about 250 main stations. Further, the cooperative's consulting engineer is making final plans for the submission of the application for its eighth REA loan to establish service in the Huxley community about 18 miles east of Center, Texas.

Already, Eastex is serving 3,062 subscribers over 2,000 miles of line through 16 exchanges, in 16 towns or communities, in 7 counties in eastern Texas—a truly enviable growth record for a cooperative which began operating only a decade ago with 204 subscribers on 2 exchanges.

Linemen terminate lashing wire on plastic-insulated aerial cable for the Eastex Telephone cooperative.





Individual cages make it easier for Armstrong to feed and water the laying hens; eggs roll down into a wire trough from which they are gathered with ease.

Electricity Aids Blind Poultryman

Infrared lamps are used for brooders from 4 to 8 weeks of age. Armstrong has approximately 500 White Leghorn chicks in an upstairs portion of his henhouse.



IN the last 3 years, Robert L. Armstrong has become one of the major power users of the Northwestern Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc. at Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania. His thriving poultry and egg business now uses from 4,000 to 7,000 kwh a month and is expected to use even more in the near future. Armstrong has been blind since 1957, but this has not prevented him from embarking on a new venture and making it a success.

Prior to August 4, 1957, he was a logging contractor in Diamond, Pennsylvania. On that fateful day, he was helping to blast a drainage trench around a friend's home. The last dynamite charge was placed and Armstrong lit the fuse. Without warning, the dynamite preignited, throwing Armstrong to the ground. He was rushed to the hospital where he received the grim news that his sight was completely gone.

While he was hospitalized, his two employees fulfilled his outstanding logging contracts, but no new contracts were made because he knew he would not be able to continue his logging business. By the spring of 1958, he was a man without a job—and he had no idea what kind of job he might be able to do. But, because he was the head of a family, he knew he had to do something—and soon!

His interest in the poultry business was first kindled by a feed salesman trying to gain a customer. Armstrong had farmed with his father, but was not familiar with the poultry business. He had many doubts about his ability to do a successful job, but after much indecision, he decided to give it a try. In April 1958, he received his first cages.

Today he has some 1,500 laying hens, broods 500 chicks, and sells fryers and capons. Armstrong dresses his own fryers and has an assembly line of electric aids to lighten his workload and speed up the job. First the

scalders prepares the fryers for picking. Then, the electric picker plucks them. Next they are placed in a plumping tank, which sets the skin and gives a good appearance to the fryer. Finally, they are washed and cooled and ready for sale.

Armstrong also retails eggs in the surrounding area and claims with modest pride that he “never has any eggs unsold.” The laying hens are housed in individual cages with a wire trough in front of each cage. The eggs roll down into the trough, where they are gathered by Armstrong. Then his wife takes over, candling them. She helps her husband all she can, but she suffers from an allergy to the henhouse dust, which sometimes forces her to retreat to her home.

The cage house for brooding is located upstairs over the henhouse. Armstrong keeps the baby chicks under an electric contact element similar to a warm pad until they are 4 weeks of age. From the fourth to eighth week he keeps them warm with infrared lamps.

Other electric installations which aid Armstrong's poultry business include fluorescent lights, that burn in the cage house about 15 hours each day. In addition, he uses two forced air fans and three exhaust fans for ventilation. Further, he is planning to install electrically operated floor cleaners as soon as possible.

Electricity even helps Armstrong babysit with his four children, who range in age from 3 to 9 years. He has an intercommunications system set up between the cage house and his home across the road. He says he can “tell what the kids are doing by the kind of noise they make.”

As a consumer—member of the Northwestern Rural Electric Cooperative, Armstrong is high in power use! As a neighbor and friend, he is admired and respected in his community.

Consumers Will Decide the Future

by J. C. Brown, Jr.,
Editor, *The Carolina Farmer*

Note: Mr. Brown has edited The Carolina Farmer, a magazine owned and circulated by North Carolina's rural electric cooperatives, since 1956. This year he won the George W. Haggard Award, presented by National Rural Electric Cooperative Association for the year's most lucid, forthright, and effective treatment of overall objectives of rural electrification. He is currently president of Rural Electric Consumer Publications, and his magazine has twice won RECP's human interest award. A native of Gainesville, Florida, and a World War II Navy veteran, Mr. Brown is a former newspaperman and a graduate of the University of North Carolina. The views expressed in this article are his own.

ONE thing in our future seems simple and clear, but tangled as we are in putting out brush fires, there is danger we may overlook it. It is that our future as consumer-owned businesses will be determined by consumers. In most cases, our cooperatives do not have protected territories. In almost every instance where a new load is at stake, consumers in our area have a choice of suppliers.

No longer does a prospective member ask: "Will your cooperative run a line to my place?"

Today he is apt to ask: "What can your cooperative offer that the other supplier can't?"

Companies, which 10 years ago were willing to let cooperatives pioneer an area, now are working Sundays to get a line down the road with the first hint that a farm may be subdivided for residential lots.

For a fact, the consumer-owned system does have something to offer that the competition can't, and there's no reason why the natural advantage can't be sold to the prospective consumer. The power company exists to make a

profit. While service may be excellent, it is only incidental to the main objective. The sole cooperative aim is service, and it should be prepared to engage in any honorable activity that protects its ability to continue to provide utility service on a nonprofit basis.

Where our competition is vigorous and service-minded, staying in business will require a boldness and imagination on the part of cooperatives.

When inadequate wiring is a barrier to providing service, and a threat to the economy of the cooperative, it should finance wiring. If it is hard to get electricians to make service calls in the country, the cooperative should do it. If poor housing is a barrier, for example, why shouldn't cooperatives help arrange financing of new homes? Why shouldn't they help build the economy of their areas with investment in small industry or in new farm enterprises? Surely a system's charter could be amended to permit it to offer a variety of useful services.

While our principle of *Service First* should give us an edge in attracting

consumers that locate in "our" area, our competition has a number of things working in its favor. These are but a few:

1. Rates that appear lower—on the surface.
2. The attitude of some regulatory commissions.
3. The sympathy of some newspaper publishers and editors.

Cooperatives usually have good explanations for their rate structures. They can always explain that comparisons with other types of suppliers fail to consider the value of member-furnished capital.

But as author Gerald White Johnson put it, "It is always awkward to have to explain." It is especially awkward when the cooperative bothers to tell its story only when defending against an attack. Will a cooperative then have an audience for its side of the story?

We believe that it always will have an audience if it has created an authoritative voice of rural electrification in its state. For example, while the publication I edit is a member-publication, it speaks to a very large segment of North Carolina's public—an estimated 810,000 persons. We have



Mr. Brown working at his typewriter.

tried to be frank enough with our readers so that they look to us for their information on rural electrification. We believe that our readers are accustomed now to relying on us for the facts. Wherever local cooperatives have given their statewide member publications the economic means to build prestige, and wherever such publications are circulated widely and regularly, we are convinced that consumers will make a wise decision when they choose among power suppliers.

Want To Improve Your News Coverage?

ARE you satisfied with the news coverage your cooperative is getting? If your answer to this question is "no" and you'd like to do something about it, a new publication, *Making News Stories Work For You*, may be of help to you. Although slanted toward extension workers, this bulletin carries a wealth of general information on the techniques of news writing.

It discusses in clear readable style such subjects as what news is, how to plan your news program, news story construction, and the mechanics of preparing copy for the newspaper editor.

If you wish to obtain this informative bulletin, single copies may be had by writing to the Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C., for a limited time.

Power Lines



Co-ops Sell Milk Pasteurizers

Two midwest electric cooperatives are promoting home milk pasteurizers to enable their members to pasteurize milk for their own use. Clarke Electric Cooperative, Osceola, Iowa, is selling a reasonably priced 1-gallon size, and Egyptian Electric Cooperative Association of Steeleville, Illinois, is featuring a 2-gallon type.

Kentucky Co-op Meters All-Electric Corn Drier

To show the cost of drying corn electrically, Green River Rural Electric Cooperative Corporation of Owensboro, Kentucky, meter-tested an all-electric crop drying unit on the farm of one of its members. During a 1-month period, the moisture content of 2,000 bushels of shelled corn was reduced from 20 percent to 14 percent. A humidistat, which operated heating elements to warm the air when humidity was high, and a powerful fan, which moved air through the grain in the bin, used a total of 2,330 kwh. The drying cost was estimated at about 1.7 cents per bushel of corn.

Minnesotans Buy Bulk Milk Coolers 'by Carload Lots

Under a group purchase plan, East Central Electric Association of Braham, Minnesota, sold a carload of bulk milk coolers during the summer of 1960 and is well on its way to selling a second carload this year. The co-op

is promoting ice-bank type milk coolers as a means of managing system demand and keeping down wholesale power costs. It sells the equipment at cost plus a small handling charge and will finance purchases at low interest.

South Dakota Co-ops Insure Chicks

Fourteen rural electric cooperatives in South Dakota again are offering a free 10-week Chick Brooding Protection Plan. Last year they insured 312,390 chicks against loss due to power failure and paid only \$52.75 in claims. The co-ops distribute registration forms through their newsletters and local hatcheries. Members, who register their chicks, receive a full refund on the purchase price on up to 500 chicks lost per outage, provided the loss is reported within 3 days.

Iowa Co-op Holds Choring Show

Recently, the Maquoketa Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Anamosa, Iowa, invited its members to a choring equipment showing at the farm of one of its members. The member, George E. McCusker, demonstrated his silo unloader with bunk augers, other electrically powered augers, barn cleaner, bulk milk tank, and ventilating systems. In addition, local dealers installed a mixer-grinder, set up crop drying equipment, and brought in a trailer containing other choring equipment. About 250 farmers were attracted to the show, despite snow.

New and Revised REA Bulletins . . .

New Bulletins

- 105-6 (1/61), "Where's Your Electric Co-op Headed?" This leaflet briefly describes the advantages to cooperatives of having a long range financial plan.
- 345-18 (1/23/61) "REA Specification for Plastic-Insulated, Plastic-Jacketed Station Wire." The bulletin transmits revised REA specifications (PE-20) for plastic-insulated, plastic-jacketed station wire.

Supplements and Partial Revisions

- 320-14 (1/5/61), "Loan Applications from Telephone Borrowers to Finance System Improvements and Extensions." New pages 7, 8, and 9 providing a revised REA Form 780, "Service Requirements and Construction Cost Estimates," and instructions for its completion.
- 414-1 (1/16/61), "Minimum Insurance and Fidelity Coverage for Telephone Borrowers." A memorandum emphasizing the importance of borrowers reviewing liability insurance coverage in connection with buried plant construction.
- 344-1 (1/31/61), "Methods of Purchasing Materials and Equipment for Use on Systems of Telephone Borrowers." The memorandum emphasizes the importance of borrowers furnishing suppliers with proper system information when purchasing voice frequency repeaters.
- 181-3 (2/2/61), "Accounting Interpretations for Rural Electric Borrowers." REA recommendations on handling the accounting for small tool and work equipment under the provisions of the revised Uniform System of Accounts.

THIS MONTH

- 2 *Administrator's Message*
- 3 *Public Relations . . . With a Personal Touch*
- 6 *Seaweed, Salt, and Storms*
- 9 *REA Marks Another Silver Anniversary*
- 10 *John Scott Named Assistant Administrator*
- 11 *Telephone Service the Co-op Way*
- 15 *Big—And Getting Bigger*
- 18 *Electricity Aids Blind Poultryman*
- 20 *An Editor Speaks—Consumer Will Decide the Future*
- 21 *Want to Improve Your News Coverage?*
- 22 *Power Lines*
- 23 *New and Revised REA Bulletins*

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17

BORROWER FATALITIES IN 1960



ENFORCE PROPER USE OF PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT